

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraph number [0001] as follows:

[0001] This application is a continuation of application Serial No. 09/059,718, filed April 13, 1998, now U.S. Patent 6,607,946, issued August 19, 2003, which is a continuation of application Serial No. 08/651,563, filed on May 22, 1996, now abandoned.

Please amend paragraph number [0003] as follows:

[0003] State of the Art: In the manufacturing of integrated circuits, the growth of ~~high-quality~~ high-quality insulative layers for device isolation, transistor gate dielectrics and capacitor dielectrics is of fundamental importance. As device dimensions are scaled down, thinner dielectric layers are required to maintain capacitor and transistor performance at acceptable levels. When silicon dioxide layers, which have been grown by conventional wet or dry thermal oxidation processes, are thinned, device reliability typically suffers. It is generally believed that the quality of silicon dioxide layers is inversely proportional to the number of interface states (i.e., dangling silicon bonds) present per unit volume. In other words, quality and long-term reliability of a silicon dioxide layer will increase as the number of dangling silicon bonds is reduced.